(c) if so, the details, and facts thereof; and

(d) what further steps are contemplated by Government to maintain strict vigil on MTNL employees/cable thefts in the Capital?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir. A few persons have been apprehended by the police recently in this connection at the initiative of MTNL employees.

(b) and (c) In one case during January, 1992 at the initiative of an MTNL Officer, five persons including three MTNL employees suspected to be involved in cable theft from departmental cable store were arrested by Paschim Vihar Police.

(d) The following steps have been taken:

(i) Patrolling of important cable routes.

(ii) Double locking of manhole covers.

(iii) Laying of cables in concrete in open culverts.

(iv) Close co-ordination with police authorities.

Details of Telephone Exchanges in Rajasthan

1898. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the particulars of the new Telephone Exchanges in Rajasthan proposal to be set up during the year 1992-93;

(b) the details of the Exchanges that are planned to be upgraded and converted into digital or electronic system;

(c) what is the programme for the installation of rural automatic exchanges in the tribal areas of Rajasthan;

(d) what are the details of the conversion of Manual to Automatic exchanges; and

(e) what are the details the new Telegraph offices planned to be opened during the above period particularly in the tribal areas;

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) About 50 New Telephone Exchanges are expected to be opened in Rajasthan during the year 1992-93.

(b) About 150 No. of existing telephone exchanges of Electro Mechanical type are proposed to be upgraded and converted into Electronic Exchanges during 1992-93.

(c) Rural automatic exchanges are proposed to be installed duiring 1992-93 in the following tribal places of Rajasthan:

1. Salamgarh	District	Chittorgarh
2. Dalot	,,	,,
3. Mada	District	Banswara
4. Ghodaji ka Gudda	,,	,,
5. Sallopat	,,	,,
6. Chinch	,,	,,

(d) About 55 No. of Manual Telephone Exchanges in Rajasthan are likely to be converted into Automatic Exchanges during 1992-93.

(e) About 8 new Telegraph Offices are planned to be set up during 1992-93 in Rajasthan out of which one Telegraph office is planned at Dungarpur District Headquarters which is a tribal area.

Loss to Postal Department due to Strike

1899. SHRI NYODEK YONGGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 78 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th February 1992 and state:

(a) what was the total loss to the Postal Department due to D-Grade postal employees strike in the North Eastern States;

(b) whether their demands have been met; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha.

(b) The demand of the Group 'C' and 'D' postal employees in the North Eastern region is that they may be paid

Special Duty Allowance. It has not been possible to take a decision on this demand so far because the matter is *sub-judice* as review applications are pending on this issue before the Principal Bench of Central Administrative Tribunal, Delhi.

(c) In view of (b) above, does not arise.

Electronic Telephone Exchanges in Arunachal Pradesh

1900. SHRI NYODEK YONGGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up more electronic telephone exchanges in the country particularly in Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, what is the total number of electronic and non-electronic exchanges at present in Arunachal Pradesh; and

(c) by when non-electronic telephone exchanges are likely to be converted into electronic exchanges in the State of Arunachal Pradesh?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are 28 electronic and 9 Nos. of non-electronic exchanges in Arunachal Pradesh.

(c) The non-electronic exchanges in Arunachal Pradesh are planned to be replaced by electronic exchanges progressively in 8th Plan period.

Expansion of Telephone Network

1901. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to have 20 million phones by 2000 A.D. as reported in the *Economic Times* of the 6th February 1992;

(b) if so, what are the details of the plans indicating how the existing and primary units in Karnataka and other places will be expanded; and

(c) whether Government propose to select any place in Karnataka near Jog Falls etc. and near Halebid shrine which may develop as zero pollution industrial areas?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Perspective plan 2000 AD envisages:

- To reduce the waiting period for a telephone substantially, to the order of a few months by increasing the growth rate of providing telephone connections from about 10% to 18%.
- Provision of Telephone facility in every village.
- Provision of Highway telephone facility.
- All exchanges to have national subscriber dialling facility.
- Provision of Bureaufax facility at each telegraph office.

Depending on the availability of resources both physical and financial, the telephone network of Karnataka Circle is expected to expand from 3.47 lakh telephone connections as on 31.1.92 to around 12 lakh telephone connections by 2000 A.D. and telephone would be extended to all 26826 villages of the State.

(c) No, Sir.

Restriction on the Duration of Local Calls

1902. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to restrict the duration of local calls of telephones throughout the country; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) The proposal to introduce time metering of local calls is still under the consideration of the Government.

(b) This is proposed mainly to decongest the system so as to improve the call success rate.